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PERSONALITY AND PRESIDENTIAL DECISION MAKING

COMPARING THE PERSONALITY PROFILES

OF BARACK OBAMA AND FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT

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Abstract

Personality and Presidential Decision Making: Comparing the Personality Profiles of Barack Obama and Franklin D. Roosevelt

This paper presents the results of indirect assessments of the personalities of U.S. presidents Franklin D. Roosevelt and Barack H. Obama, from the conceptual perspective of personologist Theodore Millon. Information concerning Roosevelt and Obama was collected from biographical sources and published reports and synthesized into personality profiles using the second edition of the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC), which yields 34 normal and maladaptive personality classifications congruent with Axis II of *DSM-IV*.

The personality profiles yielded by the MIDC were analyzed on the basis of interpretive guidelines provided in the MIDC manual. Roosevelt's primary personality pattern was found to be Dominant/controlling, with secondary features of the Ambitious/self-serving and Conscientious/dutiful patterns. Obama's primary personality pattern was found to be Ambitious/self-serving, with secondary features of the Conscientious/respectful and Retiring/reserved patterns.

Roosevelt's and Obama's personalities are compared and contrasted and the influence of their personality patterns on presidential decision making discussed in the context of parallel political and economic challenges faced by these two presidents.

Introduction

Franklin D. Roosevelt and Barack Obama are arguably two of the most charismatic and popular Democratic candidates elected to the office of President of the United States in a century. Although more than 70 years separates their inaugurations, both historical and personality parallels can be drawn between Roosevelt and Obama.

The first of the two historical parallels between Roosevelt and Obama deals with the severe economic hardship that plagued the United States just prior to and during the presidency of both men. In 1933 the United States was in the midst of the Great Depression, the worst economic depression in our nation's history. At the time of Roosevelt's election, the unemployment rate in the United States was 33 percent and manufacturing was roughly 40 percent of what it had been in the mid-1920s (Greenberg, 2010, p. 85). To fast forward 75 years, the economic collapse that occurred in 2008–2009 was by all accounts the worst since the Great Depression (Greenberg, 2010, p. 85). Between November 2008 and April 2009 approximately 645,000 Americans lost their jobs each month. One in three of the 10 percent of unemployed Americans had been without a job for more than 27 weeks, a record for the post-World War II United States (Greenberg, 2010, p. 86).

The second historical parallel between the presidencies of Roosevelt and Obama is the similar political climate in which each was elected. In both 1932 and 2008, the United States signaled political change, electing two Democrats (Roosevelt and Obama) to succeed two unpopular Republicans (Herbert Hoover and George W. Bush). In comparing Herbert Hoover and George W. Bush, noted U.S. historian Douglas Brinkley wrote in the fall of 2006 that Bush “has joined Hoover as a case study on how not to be president” (Leuchtenburg, 2008). William E. Leuchtenburg, the author of *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal* (1963) had the following to say about the similarities between Hoover and Bush:

Indeed, Hoover does resemble Bush in a number of regrettable ways. He was stubborn and often myopic. He rejected counsel that did not accord with his misconceptions, and he deceived himself that conditions were far better than they were. He agreed to a massive federal program only after a long period of resistance, and he appointed men to administer it who had small sympathy for government intrusion into the private sector. He favored aid to financial institutions, but not to the victims of hard times. He was nonplused about how to stanch the hemorrhaging when the financial illness became an epidemic. Furthermore, he failed to inspire the nation. (Leuchtenburg, 2008)

The American people communicated that they desired a change in leadership in both 1932 and 2008. The present study analyzes and compares the personalities of the two presidents Americans voted into office in these two landmark elections — Franklin D. Roosevelt and Barack Obama.

One issue that arose in the study was how to approach the disparity between Roosevelt and Obama in time served as president. Because Roosevelt was elected to an unprecedented four terms and Obama at the time of the study was just halfway through his first term, we decided to analyze and compare Roosevelt and Obama only up until the time each was elected president.

However, when gathering data for the personality profiles of each president, data from the entire adult life of both presidents were used.

The study was conducted using Theodore Millon's model of personality (1969, 1986a, 1986b, 1990, 1991, 1994, 1996, 2003; Millon & Davis, 2000; Millon & Everly, 1985) as adapted (Immelman, 1993, 1998, 2002, 2003) as the tool for the assessment of personality in politics.

Following Immelman, the terms *personality* and *politics* are used in accordance with Fred Greenstein's (1992) definition. Politics, by this definition, "refers to the politics most often studied by political scientists — that of civil government and of the extra-governmental processes that more or less directly impinge upon government, such as political parties" and campaigns. Personality, as narrowly construed in political psychology, "excludes political attitudes and opinions ... and applies only to nonpolitical personal differences" (p. 107).

Immelman (2002, 2003, 2005), following Millon defines personality as

a complex pattern of deeply embedded psychological characteristics that are largely nonconscious and not easily altered, expressing themselves automatically in almost every facet of functioning. Intrinsic and pervasive, these traits emerge from a complicated matrix of biological dispositions and experiential learnings, and ultimately comprise the individual's distinctive pattern of perceiving, feeling, thinking, coping, and behaving. (Millon, 1996, p. 4)

As noted by Immelman, Greenstein (1992) makes an important point about the importance of studying personality in government and politics: "Political institutions and processes operate through human agency. It would be remarkable if they were *not* influenced by the properties that distinguish one individual from another" (p. 124).

This perspective provides the context for the current paper, which presents an analysis of the personalities of Franklin D. Roosevelt and Barack Obama and examines the political implications of their respective personality profiles — especially the question of how prominent traits in their profiles influenced their decision making.

The methodology employed in the study involves the construction of theoretically grounded personality profiles derived from empirical analysis of biographical source materials (see Immelman, 2003, 2004, 2005).

Immelman (2003, 2005) provides a comprehensive review of Millon's personological model, which encompasses eight attribute domains: expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization (see Table 1).

Table 1
Millon's Eight Attribute Domains

Attribute	Description
Expressive behavior	The individual's characteristic behavior; how the individual typically appears to others; what the individual knowingly or unknowingly reveals about him- or herself; what the individual wishes others to think or to know about him or her.
Interpersonal conduct	How the individual typically interacts with others; the attitudes that underlie, prompt, and give shape to these actions; the methods by which the individual engages others to meet his or her needs; how the individual copes with social tensions and conflicts.
Cognitive style	How the individual focuses and allocates attention, encodes and processes information, organizes thoughts, makes attributions, and communicates reactions and ideas to others.
Mood/temperament	How the individual typically displays emotion; the predominant character of an individual's affect and the intensity and frequency with which he or she expresses it.
Self-image	The individual's perception of self-as-object or the manner in which the individual overtly describes him- or herself.
Regulatory mechanisms	The individual's characteristic mechanisms of self-protection, need gratification, and conflict resolution.
Object representations	The inner imprint left by the individual's significant early experiences with others; the structural residue of significant past experiences, composed of memories, attitudes, and affects that underlie the individual's perceptions of and reactions to ongoing events and serve as a substrate of dispositions for perceiving and reacting to life's ongoing events.
Morphologic organization	The overall architecture that serves as a framework for the individual's psychic interior; the structural strength, interior congruity, and functional efficacy of the personality system (i.e., ego strength).

Note: From Disorders of Personality: DSM–IV and Beyond (pp. 141–146) by T. Millon, 1996, New York: Wiley; Toward a New Personology: An Evolutionary Model (chapter 5) by T. Millon, 1990, New York: Wiley; and Personality and Its Disorders: A Biosocial Learning Approach (p. 32) by T. Millon and G. S. Everly, Jr., 1985, New York: Wiley. Copyright © 1996, © 1990, © 1985 by John Wiley & Sons, Inc. Adapted by permission of John Wiley & Sons, Inc. and Theodore Millon.

Historical Setting: Franklin D. Roosevelt

Early life. Franklin Delano Roosevelt (FDR) was born on January 30, 1882 to Sara (Delano) and James Roosevelt in Hyde Park, NY. Franklin was an only child born into a wealthy family, and as a result he lived a very secure and protected life. Growing up, Franklin liked to ride horses, shoot, play polo and lawn tennis, and collect stamps. (Smith, 2007, p. 24).

FDR attended traditional school intermittently until age 14 when he was enrolled at Groton, a prestigious and exclusive Episcopal boarding school in Massachusetts. Tuition at Groton was \$500 a year, which at that time was about twice the income of the average American family (Smith, 2007, p. 26). Being raised in the Episcopal faith was something that had a profound impact on Roosevelt throughout his life. Smith (2007) writes that “religious faith provided one of the sources of FDR’s unflagging optimism” (p. 24). Roosevelt would need to rely heavily on this optimism through the tribulations he would later lead Americans through as their president.

FDR enrolled at Harvard in the fall of 1900 and favored courses in economics, government, and history. During his second year, Roosevelt was elected to the editorial board of *The Harvard Crimson*, the school newspaper. At the end of his third year, he was elected the newspaper’s editor-in-chief. Roosevelt earned his degree at the end of his third year — due to classes from Groton counting toward his degree — but stayed an extra year to fulfill his duties as editor. One biographer wrote of FDR’s time at Harvard saying, “At Groton, Roosevelt learned to get along with his contemporaries; at Harvard he learned to lead them” (Smith, 2007, p. 33).

After his graduation, FDR enrolled in Columbia Law School in September 1904. He did not take his studies at Columbia seriously, due in part his active social life and his marriage to his fifth cousin, Eleanor Roosevelt, on St. Patrick’s Day 1905. The combination of these factors led to 73 absences in FDR’s first year at Columbia (Smith, 2007, p. 51). One Columbia professor said that FDR had little aptitude for law and “made no effort to overcome that handicap by hard work” (Smith, 2007, p. 51).

About halfway through his third year at Columbia Law School, Roosevelt took the New York bar examination and passed. Upon passing the examination, he was permitted to practice law and dropped out of Columbia. In September 1907, Roosevelt was hired at the reputable Wall Street law office of Carter, Ledyard and Milburn as an apprentice. Smith (2007) writes that “FDR had little passion for the law, but he was a fast learner blessed with an avuncular, ingratiating personality” (p. 58). Grenville Clark, a Harvard classmate of Roosevelt’s who was a fellow clerk at the law firm later recalled FDR telling him about his future plans:

We were a small group and in our leisure hours sometimes fell into discussions of our hopes and ambitions. I remember him saying with engaging frankness that he wasn’t going to practice law forever, that he intended to run for office at the first opportunity, and that he wanted to be and thought he had a real chance to be President. I remember that he described very accurately the steps which he thought could lead to this goal. They were: first, a seat in the State Assembly, then an appointment as Assistant Secretary of the Navy ... and finally the governorship of New York. “Anyone who is governor of New York has a good chance to be president,” he [FDR] said. I do not recall that even

then, in 1907, any of us deprecated his ambition or even smiled at it as we might have done. It seemed proper and sincere and moreover, as he put it, entirely reasonable. (Smith, 2007, p. 59)

After working for Carter, Ledyard and Milburn for a few years, Roosevelt would get a chance to put his plan to become president into action.

Political career. Roosevelt's first political campaign came in 1910, when he received the Democratic nomination for the New York State Senate. The Twenty-Sixth Senatorial District seat for which he was running was comprised of three counties in upstate New York and with one exception had not been won by a Democrat since 1856 (Smith, 2007, p. 64). Roosevelt was not deterred, campaigning very hard for the seat, even renting the only local automobile and touring the district. His dedicated effort paid off, and he won the election on November 8, 1910 by carrying more than two thirds of the precincts (Smith, 2007, p. 68).

After three years serving in the state senate, Roosevelt was appointed to be Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1913. The move to Washington, D.C. was a big adjustment for Roosevelt, and one that he readily welcomed. During his time working for the Navy, Roosevelt played a small but important role in the rearmament and management of the U.S. Navy during the First World War.

Roosevelt resigned his post as Assistant Secretary of the Navy in 1920, having accepted an invitation to be presidential candidate James Cox's vice-presidential running mate. On Election Day, things did not go as planned for the Democrats and Cox and Roosevelt lost to Warren G. Harding and Calvin Coolidge.

After suffering defeat in the 1920 presidential election, Roosevelt took a break from politics and worked on Wall Street as vice president for the Fidelity & Deposit Company. He laid plans with his political advisor Louis Howe for a return to New York state politics in 1922. However, his plans — and life for that matter — would change in the summer of 1921 when he contracted polio while vacationing at his summer home in Campobello, New Brunswick, Canada.

Initially, Roosevelt was paralyzed from the chest down. After repeated blunders on the part of his doctors, Roosevelt was finally correctly diagnosed two weeks after symptoms initially appeared. In mid-September 1921, Roosevelt was moved back to New York, where he was treated by Dr. George Draper. Draper, a Harvard classmate of Roosevelt's, had the following to say about his patient:

He has such courage, such ambition, and yet at the same time such an extraordinarily sensitive emotional mechanism, that it will take all the skill we can muster to lead him successfully to a recognition of what he really faces without utterly crushing him. (Smith, 2007, p. 193)

FDR slowly improved, thanks in part to his courage and ambition, attributes that would later be two of his greatest assets as president.

As courageous and ambitious as Roosevelt was, he never regained the full use of his legs, moving with the help of braces, crutches, or a wheelchair for the rest of his life. He spent the better part of the next two years recovering from his bout with polio, returning to work in October 1923. The next four and a half years were relatively quiet for Roosevelt, as he chose to focus primarily on business ventures.

Though he initially refused, Roosevelt accepted the Democratic Party nomination for the governorship of New York in 1928. He won the election over Republican Albert Ottinger by a count of 2,130,238 to 2,104,630, a margin of just 25,608 votes (Smith, 2007, p. 228). Soon after he took the oath of office on January 1, 1929, Roosevelt was hailed the next leader of the Democratic Party, as Barack Obama would also be 75 years later at the 2004 Democratic National Convention. The *New York Times* declared,

It is too early to select the new leader of the Democratic Party or to predict nominations for a date so remote as 1932. Yet by a most extraordinary combination of qualities, political fortunes and diversified associations, Governor-elect Roosevelt is within reach of the elements of party leadership. (Smith, 2007, p. 229)

Even though he was being proclaimed the next leader of the Democratic Party, Roosevelt did not want to announce his candidacy too early. When asked about his intentions to run for president in 1932, Roosevelt replied, “I want to step on any talk of that kind with both feet” (Smith, 2007, p. 230). Regardless of whether or not Roosevelt ran for president in 1932, the putative presidential frontrunner would have been incumbent Herbert Hoover. However, the catastrophic economic meltdown augured in by Black Tuesday turned the electoral tide of America.

Roosevelt easily won gubernatorial reelection in 1930, defeating his Republican opponent Charles H. Tuttle by 725,000 votes — the largest margin of any gubernatorial victory in state history (Smith, 2007, p. 245). Smith (2007) writes of Roosevelt’s landslide victory, saying “times were hard, and voters wanted a change” (Smith, 2007, p. 245). This theme of change would carry over into the 1932 presidential election, where Republicans would suffer a crushing defeat, with Franklin D. Roosevelt being elected President of the United States.

Presidential campaign and election. Roosevelt officially announced his candidacy for president on January 23, 1932, with state primaries beginning the next month. A number of states that held early primaries, such as New Hampshire, Minnesota, and Georgia voted pro-Roosevelt and he carried that momentum through to the Democratic National Convention of 1932. After Roosevelt won the Democratic nomination, he broke with a longstanding tradition and traveled to Chicago to deliver an acceptance speech in front of the convention. Not only did Roosevelt break with tradition and deliver an acceptance speech, he did so in dramatic fashion by flying to Chicago, a mode of travel statistically relatively risky in 1932 (Smith, 2007, p. 275).

Roosevelt carried the overwhelming support of Democrats through Election Day. In addition, frustrated Americans sought change and economic reform. The Great Depression was gathering steam, and by the time Roosevelt took the oath of office the unemployment rate in the United States was 33 percent (Greenberg, 2010, p. 85). On Election Day, Americans communicated a clear desire for change, giving Roosevelt a resounding victory over incumbent

Herbert Hoover. Roosevelt won 42 states and received 22,825,016 votes to Hoover's 15,758,397 (Smith, 2007, p. 287). With his victory, Franklin D. Roosevelt became the 32nd president of the United States, a presidency that would prove to be historic in numerous ways.

Historical Setting: Barack Obama

Early life. Barack Hussein Obama was born on August 4, 1961 to Ann (Dunham) and Barack Obama Sr. in Honolulu, Hawaii. Obama's family background differs from that of Roosevelt's in that Obama was born into a family of average means and eight half-siblings. In contrast, FDR was an only child born into a wealthy family from the northeastern elite. Growing up, his nickname was "Barry," while his middle name pays homage to his paternal grandfather, Hussein. Two years after he was born, Barack Jr.'s parents divorced and four years later his mother married Lolo Soetoro, who moved the family to Indonesia, Soetoro's native country. In 1971, at the age of 10, Ann sent Barack to live with his grandparents in Hawaii with the goal of a better education for her son. His grandparents enrolled 10-year-old Barack at the prestigious Punahou Academy — a college preparatory school — in 1971, where he remained until his high school graduation in 1979 (Price, 2008, pp. 17–23).

After graduating from high school, Obama enrolled at Occidental College in Los Angeles. In 1981, as a 20-year-old college junior, he decided to take advantage of a transfer program between Occidental College and Columbia University in New York City. While at Columbia, he studied political science and international relations, adopting a rigorous study schedule. Obama later reminisced about his college years, describing them as "an intense period of study," recalling, "I spent a lot of time in the library. I didn't socialize that much. I was like a monk" (Price, 2008, p. 33).

Upon graduating from Columbia University in 1983, Obama decided to become a community activist. Even though he had recently graduated from college, he already had a vision about changing the mood of the country. He thought this sort of change would be best undertaken at the grassroots level. These early ideas and visions proved later to become central themes in his successful campaign to become the first African-American president in the history of the United States (Price, 2008, p. 33).

Obama's first job as a community organizer came at the age of 24. He worked as an assistant to Marty Kaufman, who was attempting to organize urban blacks and suburban whites to save Chicago-area manufacturing jobs. After a slow and tumultuous start, Obama's career as a community organizer took off and he soon became a respected figure in the Chicago community. According to Price (2008), Michael Evans of the Developing Communities Project remembers Obama saying,

You can only go so far in organizing. You help people get some solutions, but it's never as big as wiping away problems.' It wasn't an end-all. He wanted to be part of the end-all, to get things done. (p. 39)

To become part of the end-all, Obama decided to apply to law school. He was accepted to Harvard Law School, where he arrived in the fall of 1988 at the age of 27. During his second year, Obama was elected president of the *Harvard Law Review* — the first African-American to

hold that title in its 104-year existence. Soon after his election to that prestigious position, he was contacted by publishers and agreed to write his first book, *Dreams from My Father* (Price, 2008, pp. 47–48).

In 1991, at the age of 29, Barack Obama graduated from Harvard Law School magna cum laude. After graduating, he returned to Chicago as an associate at a law firm that melded well with his goal of community work. He later became an adjunct faculty member at the University of Chicago Law School, where he taught constitutional law (Price, 2008, pp. 51–52).

Political career. Obama's first political office was in the Illinois State Senate, a position to which he was elected in 1996. While a state senator, he served on the public health and welfare committee as well as the judiciary and local government committees. While a state senator, Obama was extremely active in the legislative process. According to Price (2008), he introduced or was chief cosponsor of 116 bills, 25 of which became law, over his first three years as an Illinois State Senator (p. 55).

In 1999, Obama made the decision to challenge four-term incumbent Bobby Rush for his seat in the U.S. House of Representatives. He lost the race by a two-to-one margin and Obama himself described the election results as quite a “spanking” (Price, 2008, p. 57). After suffering defeat, he returned to his post in the Illinois State Senate and his teaching at the University of Chicago.

Barack Obama soon became restless teaching and with his position as a state senator, and in September 2003 he formally entered the U.S. Senate race in the state of Illinois. Even though he was facing an uphill battle against several distinguished politicians with deep pockets, Obama was not deterred. By the second quarter of the campaign season, Obama was only \$69,000 behind frontrunner Daniel Hynes in campaign funds (Price, 2008, p. 58).

Perhaps the most important factor in propelling Barack Obama into the national Democratic Party spotlight came when he was asked by John Kerry to give the keynote address at the 2004 Democratic National Convention in Boston. The state senator from Illinois in the midst of a campaign for U.S. Senate did not disappoint his audience. *Newsweek* columnist Anna Quindlen, in an August 9, 2004 article titled “A Leap into the Possible,” described her perception of Obama's speech:

As much of the country knows by now, the Senate candidate from Illinois is a born orator, passionate yet reasonable in a venue that seems to bring out the inner screamer in even the most seasoned politician. He galvanized a gathering long on orchestration and short on surprise. And one more thing: he revived the power and the glory of American liberalism just by showing up. (Price, 2008, p. 61)

Not only did this speech propel him into the national spotlight of the Democratic Party, but it undoubtedly helped him triumph in the primary election from a field of seven candidates and also contributed to his victory in the general election by a margin of 70 percent to 27 percent. With his U.S. Senate victory, Barack Obama at age 42 became the only African-American senator at that time and only the fifth in senate history (Price, 2008, pp. 60–62).

Presidential campaign and election. Seemingly overnight, Barack Obama became a rising star in the Democratic Party. The day after his election he received calls from high-profile Democrats such as Senator John Kerry, Democratic national chairman Terry McAuliffe, and Senator Tom Daschle. Obama suddenly found himself “being compared to Abraham Lincoln, Martin Luther King Jr., and Bill Clinton, and many Democrats were already wondering if he should run for president in 2012 or 2016” (Price, 2008, p. 67). In the closing months of 2006, *Time* magazine published a cover article entitled “Why Barack Obama Could Be the Next President” (Price, 2008, p. 86).

Nonetheless, Obama was by no means a lock for the Democratic Party nomination in 2008 or 2012. Party strategists were quick to point out that he was a freshman senator with little experience in national politics. One strategist said, “If he had gone from state senator to governor, and he had served one term as governor and was running for president, it would have been a much more compelling case [for running in 2008] (Price, 2008, p. 87). This more traditional path to the White House is one that, among others, FDR followed, as noted earlier.

On February 10, 2007, Barack Obama announced his candidacy for the office of President of the United States in front of a crowd of 10,000 people in Springfield, IL. While Obama was indeed a “celebrity-like” candidate, he faced formidable opponents such as Hillary Clinton, John Edwards, and Joe Biden, among others.

The race for Democratic Party nomination proved to be a grudge match between Obama and Hillary Clinton. Price (2008) notes,

While Senator Clinton was clearly the front-runner in all the polls, Barack had the ability, judgment, and impressive wherewithal to put together policy statements on a wide range of topics, and he had the intelligence not to trip over details that would cause embarrassment. (pp. 103–104)

In spite of the strong start that the Obama campaign achieved with a victory in the caucus of the battleground state Iowa, the Democratic Party nomination race was far from over. In the second primary, New Hampshire, Clinton bested Obama 39 percent to 36 percent. This close race foreshadowed a knockdown, drag-out fight for the party nomination.

When Clinton finally conceded and endorsed Obama on June 7, 2008, the hotly contested primary was groundbreaking in numerous ways. Heilemann and Halperin (2010) call the race “historic across every dimension, from the amount of money spent and the number of voters who had participated to its sheer closeness.” Of the 36 million votes cast in the 2008 Democratic Party primary, only 150,000 separated the two candidates (Heilemann & Halperin, 2010, p. 262). Perhaps the intangible that pushed Obama over the edge to receive the nomination is best summarized by Republican pollster Frank Luntz. In January 2007, Luntz said of Obama,

Everyone can see themselves in Obama. He is the definition of the American dream, the definition of the American promise. ... Conservatives see him as clean-cut and businesslike, while moderates see him as a problem solver. Liberals see him as a man from a multicultural background who breaks down racial and other barriers. (Price, 2008, p. 91)

The fact that so many Americans saw hope and change in Obama in 2008 is similar to the fervor America experienced when FDR was elected in 1932.

Method

Materials

The materials consisted of biographical sources and the personality inventory employed to gather diagnostically relevant information collected from the literature on Franklin D. Roosevelt and Barack Obama.

Sources of data. Diagnostic information pertaining to Franklin D. Roosevelt was collected from Robert E. Sherwood's *Roosevelt and Hopkins: An Intimate History* (1948); James MacGregor Burns's *Roosevelt: The Lion and the Fox* (1956); William E. Leuchtenburg's *Franklin D. Roosevelt and the New Deal, 1932–1940* (1963), supplemented by Leuchtenburg, 2008; and Jean Edward Smith's biography, *FDR* (2007).

Diagnostic information pertaining to Barack Obama was collected from Joann F. Price's *Barack Obama: A Biography* (2008); Evan Thomas's "*A Long Time Coming*": *The Inspiring, Combative 2008 Campaign and the Historic Election of Barack Obama* (2009); and Richard Wolffe's *Renegade: The Making of a President* (2009). Other sources consulted include Greenberg (2010), Heilemann and Halperin (2010), Kristof (2007), Rich (2006, 2007a, 2007b), Scott (2007), Thomas (2009), Wilson (2008), and Zeleny & Gordon (2007).

Personality inventory. The assessment instrument, the second edition of the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria (MIDC; Immelman & Steinberg, 1999), was compiled and adapted from Millon's (1969, 1986b; 1990, 1996; Millon & Everly, 1985) prototypal features and diagnostic criteria for normal personality styles and their pathological variants. Information concerning the construction, administration, scoring, and interpretation of the MIDC is provided in the Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria manual (Immelman, 2004). The 12-scale (see Table 2) instrument taps the first five "noninferential" (Millon, 1990, p. 157) attribute domains previously listed in Table 1.

The 12 MIDC scales correspond to major personality patterns posited by Millon (1994, 1996), which are consistent with the syndromes described on Axis II of the fourth edition of the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders (DSM–IV)* of the American Psychiatric Association (APA; 1994) and coordinated with the normal personality styles in which these disorders are rooted, as described by Millon and Everly (1985), Millon (1994), Oldham and Morris (1995), and Strack (1997). Scales 1 through 8 (comprising 10 scales and subscales) have three gradations (a, b, c) yielding 30 personality variants, whereas Scales 9 and 0 have two gradations (d, e) yielding four variants, for a total of 34 personality designations, or types. Table 2 displays the full taxonomy.

Diagnostic Procedure

The diagnostic procedure, termed *psychodiagnostic meta-analysis*, can be conceptualized as a three-part process: first, an *analysis* phase (data collection) during which source materials are reviewed and analyzed to extract and code diagnostically relevant content; second, a *synthesis* phase (scoring and interpretation) during which the unifying framework provided by the MIDC prototypal features, keyed for attribute domain and personality pattern, is employed to classify the diagnostically relevant information extracted in phase 1; and finally, an *evaluation* phase (inference) during which theoretically grounded descriptions, explanations, inferences, and predictions are extrapolated from Millon's theory of personality based on the personality profile constructed in phase 2 (see Immelman, 2003, 2004, 2005, for a more extensive account of the procedure).

Table 2
Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Scales and Gradations

Scale 1A:	Dominant pattern
a.	Asserting
b.	Controlling
c.	Aggressive (Sadistic; <i>DSM-III-R</i> , Appendix A)
Scale 1B:	Dauntless pattern
a.	Adventurous
b.	Dissenting
c.	Aggrandizing (Antisocial; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.7)
Scale 2:	Ambitious pattern
a.	Confident
b.	Self-serving
c.	Exploitative (Narcissistic; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.81)
Scale 3:	Outgoing pattern
a.	Congenial
b.	Gregarious
c.	Impulsive (Histrionic; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.50)
Scale 4:	Accommodating pattern
a.	Cooperative
b.	Agreeable
c.	Submissive (Dependent; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.6)
Scale 5A:	Aggrieved pattern
a.	Unpresuming
b.	Self-denying
c.	Self-defeating (<i>DSM-III-R</i> , Appendix A)
Scale 5B:	Contentious pattern
a.	Resolute
b.	Oppositional
c.	Negativistic (Passive-aggressive; <i>DSM-III-R</i> , 301.84)
Scale 6:	Conscientious pattern
a.	Respectful
b.	Dutiful
c.	Compulsive (Obsessive-compulsive; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.4)
Scale 7:	Reticent pattern
a.	Circumspect
b.	Inhibited
c.	Withdrawn (Avoidant; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.82)
Scale 8:	Retiring pattern
a.	Reserved
b.	Aloof
c.	Solitary (Schizoid; <i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.20)
Scale 9:	Distrusting pattern
d.	Suspicious
e.	Paranoid (<i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.0)
Scale 0:	Erratic pattern
d.	Unstable
e.	Borderline (<i>DSM-IV</i> , 301.83)

Note. Equivalent *DSM* terminology and codes are specified in parentheses.

Results: Personality Profiles

The analysis of the data includes a summary of descriptive statistics yielded by the MIDC scoring procedure, the MIDC profiles for Franklin D. Roosevelt and Barack Obama, diagnostic classification of the subjects, and the clinical interpretation of significant MIDC scale elevations derived from the diagnostic procedure.

Roosevelt received 30 endorsements on the 170-item MIDC. Judging from endorsement rates below the mean, the domain of cognitive style was the most difficult to gauge. The assessment of cognitive style in particular relies substantially on inference, a difficult task when appraising a subject at a distance.

Obama received 26 endorsements on the 170-item MIDC. As was the case for Roosevelt, the domain of cognitive style was the most difficult to judge, as was self-image. Not surprisingly, the more directly observable domain of expressive behavior yielded an endorsement frequency well above the mean.

Descriptive statistics for Roosevelt's and Obama's MIDC ratings are presented in Table 3.

Table 3
MIDC Item Endorsement Rate by Attribute Domain

Attribute domain	Roosevelt	Obama
Expressive behavior	7	11
Interpersonal conduct	6	4
Cognitive style	3	2
Mood/temperament	7	6
Self-image	7	3
Sum	30	26
Mean	6.0	5.2
Standard deviation	1.5	3.2

Roosevelt's and Obama's MIDC scale scores are reported in Table 4. The same data are presented graphically in the profiles depicted in Figures 1 and 2.

Table 4
MIDC Scale Scores

Scale	Personality pattern	Roosevelt		Obama	
		Raw	RT%	Raw	RT%
1A	Dominant: Asserting–Controlling–Aggressive	19	39.6	1	2.9
1B	Dauntless: Adventurous–Dissenting–Aggrandizing	2	4.2	3	8.6
2	Ambitious: Confident–Self-serving–Exploitative	12	25.0	10	28.6
3	Outgoing: Congenial–Gregarious–Impulsive	2	4.2	1	2.9
4	Accommodating: Cooperative–Agreeable–Submissive	1	2.1	3	8.6
5A	Aggrieved: Unpresuming–Self-denying–Self-defeating	0	0.0	0	0.0
5B	Contentious: Resolute–Oppositional–Negativistic	1	2.1	0	0.0
6	Conscientious: Respectful–Dutiful–Compulsive	11	22.9	9	25.7
7	Reticent: Circumspect–Inhibited–Withdrawn	0	0.0	1	2.9
8	Retiring: Reserved–Aloof–Solitary	0	0.0	7	20.0
	Subtotal for basic personality scales	48	100	35	100.0
9	Distrusting: Suspicious–Paranoid	8	14.3	0	0.0
0	Erratic: Unstable–Borderline	0	0.0	0	0.0
	Full-scale total	56	114.3	35	100.0

Note. For Scales 1–8, ratio-transformed (RT%) scores are the scores for each scale expressed as a percentage of the sum of raw scores for the ten basic scales only. For Scales 9 and 0, ratio-transformed scores are scores expressed as a percentage of the sum of raw scores for all twelve MIDC scales (therefore, full-scale RT% totals can exceed 100). Personality patterns are enumerated with scale gradations.

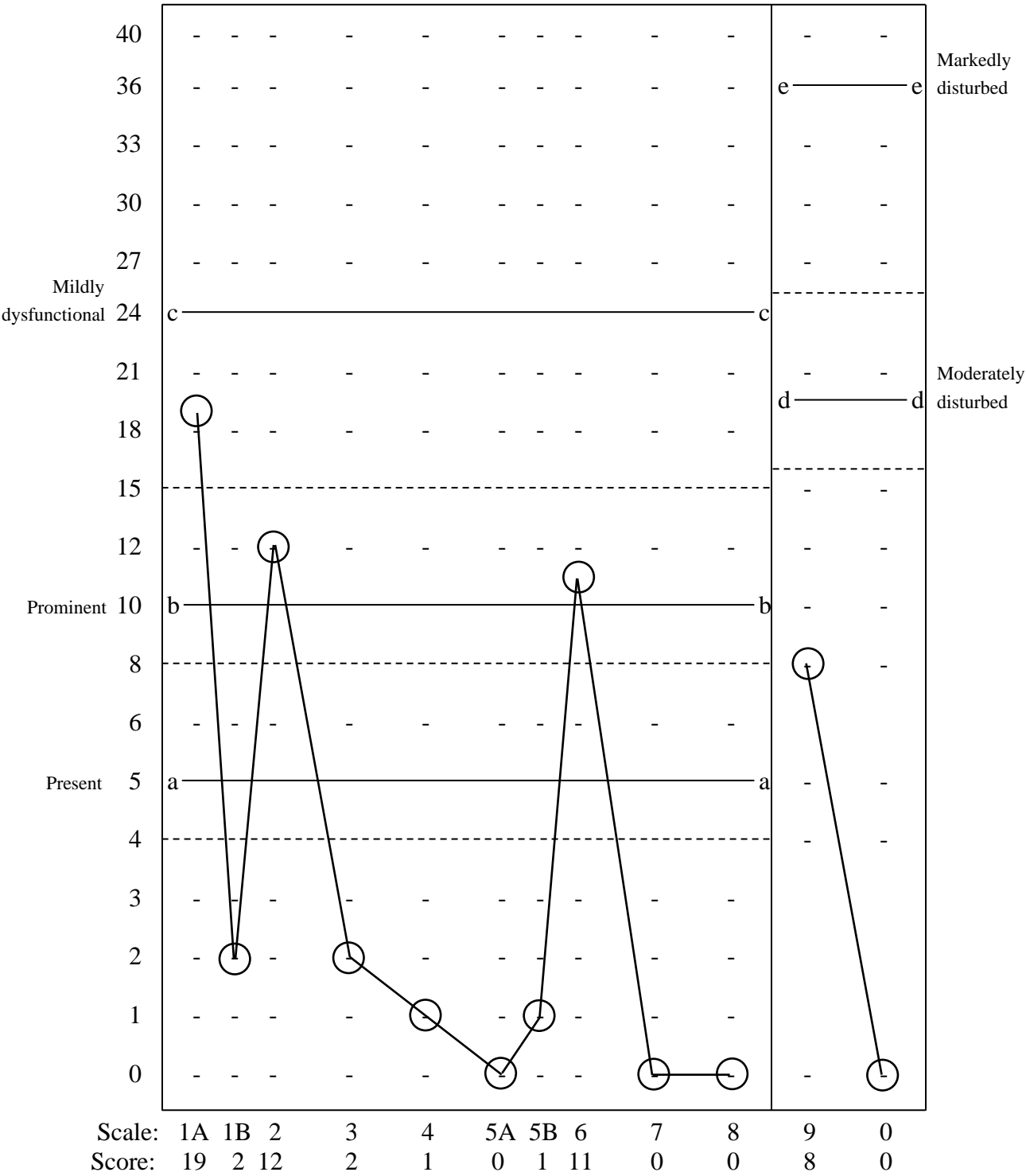
Roosevelt's Profile

The MIDC profile yielded by Roosevelt's raw scores is displayed in Figure 1. Roosevelt's most elevated scale, with a score of 19, is Scale 1A (Dominant), followed by Scale 2 (Ambitious), with a score of 12, and Scale 6 (Conscientious), with a score of 11. The primary Scale 1A elevation is well within the *prominent* (10–23) range and the two secondary elevations (Scales 2 and 6) are just within that range. No other scale elevations are psychodiagnostically significant.

Based on the cut-off score guidelines provided in the MIDC manual, all of Roosevelt's scale elevations (see Figure 1) are within normal limits, though Scale 1A (Dominant), Scale 2 (Ambitious), and Scale 6 (Conscientious) were moderately elevated, in the *prominent* range.

In terms of MIDC scale gradation (see Table 2 and Figure 1) criteria, Roosevelt was classified as a Dominant/controlling (Scale 1A) personality, with secondary features of the Ambitious/self-serving (Scale 2) and Conscientious/dutiful (Scale 6) patterns.

Figure 1. *Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Profile for Franklin D. Roosevelt*



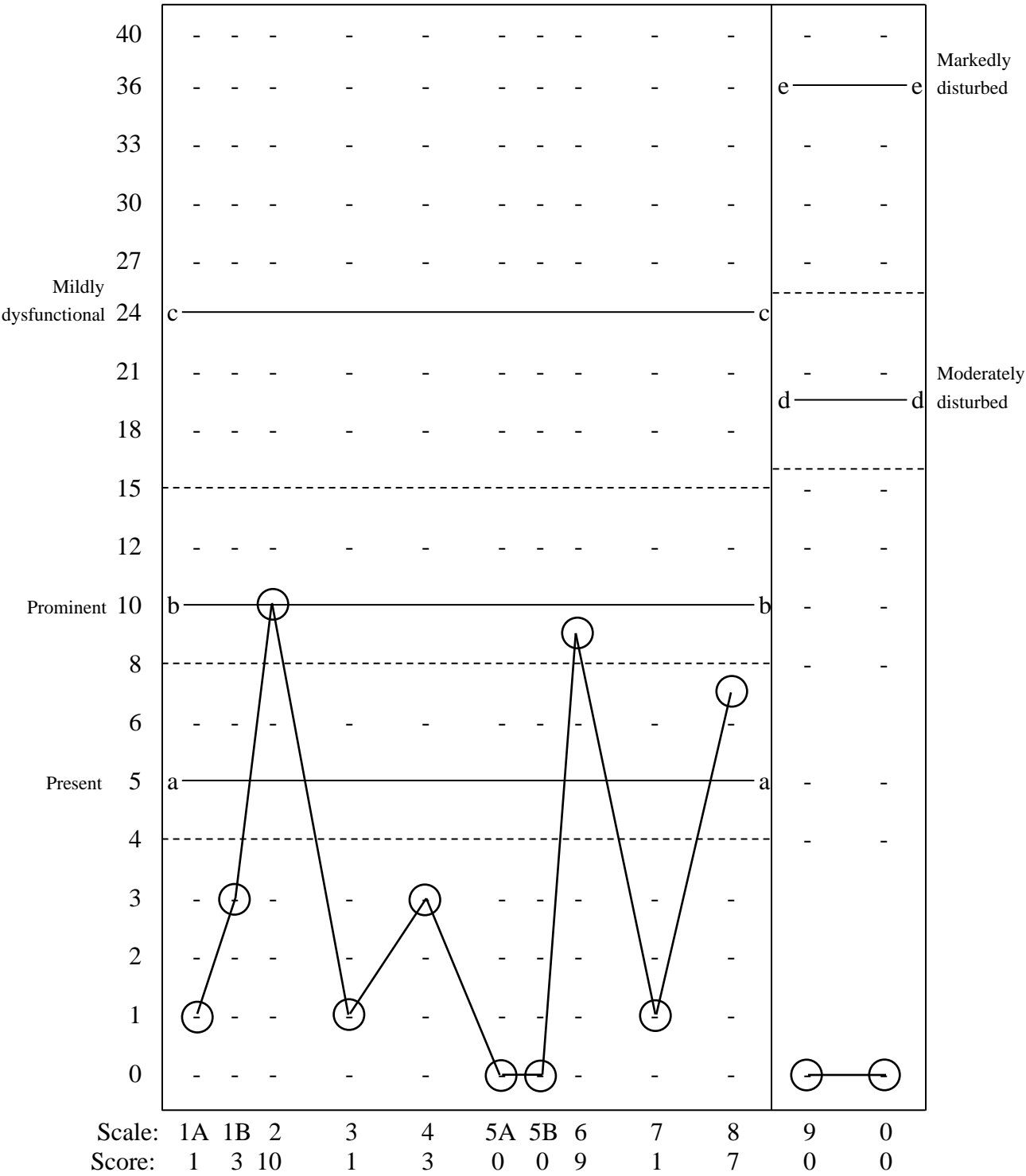
Obama's Profile

The MIDC profile yielded by Obama's raw scores is displayed in Figure 2. Obama's most elevated scale, with a score of 10, is Scale 2 (Ambitious), followed by Scale 6 (Conscientious) with a score of 9, and Scale 8 (Retiring) with a score of 7. His score on Scale 2 is at the lower end of the *prominent* (10–23) range. Obama's score on Scale 6 (Conscientious) and Scale 8 (Retiring) are at the upper limit of the *present* (5–9) range. No other scale elevation is psychodiagnostically significant.

Based on the cut-off score guidelines provided in the MIDC manual, all of Obama's scale elevations (see Figure 2) are within normal limits, though Scale 2 (Ambitious) was moderately elevated, in the *prominent* range.

In terms of MIDC scale gradation (see Table 2 and Figure 2) criteria, Obama was classified as Ambitious/self-serving (Scale 2), with secondary features of the Conscientious/respectful (Scale 6) and Retiring/reserved (Scale 8) patterns.

Figure 2. Millon Inventory of Diagnostic Criteria: Profile for Barack Obama



Discussion

The following section, much of which is reproduced or adapted from the MIDC manual (Immelman, 2004), examines Franklin D. Roosevelt's and Barack Obama's MIDC scale elevations from the perspective of Millon's (1994, 1996; Millon & Davis, 2000) model of personality, supplemented by the theoretically congruent portraits of Oldham and Morris (1995) and Strack (1997). The discussion concludes with a comparison of Roosevelt's and Obama's most prominent personality traits, supplemented by information from their adult lives prior to attaining the Office of President of the United States.

Roosevelt's Dominant Pattern

Roosevelt's highest scale elevation was on Scale 1A, which measures an individual's dominance. Roosevelt's score of 19 places him in the *controlling* range of the Dominant pattern.

The Dominant pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are strong-willed, commanding, assertive personalities. Slightly exaggerated Dominant features (as in the case of Roosevelt) occur in forceful, intimidating, controlling personalities. In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form (not relevant to Roosevelt), the Dominant pattern displays itself in domineering, belligerent, aggressive behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of sadistic personality disorder.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Dominant pattern (i.e., asserting and controlling types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Aggressive* style, Strack's (1997) *forceful* style, Millon's (1994) *Controlling* pattern, and the *managerial* segment of Leary's (1957) managerial–autocratic continuum. Millon's Controlling pattern is positively correlated with the five-factor model's *Conscientiousness* factor, has a more modest positive correlation with its *Extraversion* factor, is negatively correlated with its *Agreeableness* and *Neuroticism* factors, and is uncorrelated with its *Openness to Experience* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). Thus, these individuals — though controlling and somewhat disagreeable — tend to be emotionally stable and conscientious. In combination with the Conscientious (Scale 6) and Contentious (Scale 5B) patterns, an elevated Dominant pattern points to Simonton's (1988) *deliberative* presidential style, which appears to be the case for Roosevelt, given his Scale 6 elevation. According to Millon (1994), Controlling (i.e., Dominant) individuals

enjoy the power to direct and intimidate others, and to evoke obedience and respect from them. They tend to be tough and unsentimental, as well as gain satisfaction in actions that dictate and manipulate the lives of others. Although many sublimate their power-oriented tendencies in publicly approved roles and vocations, these inclinations become evident in occasional intransigence, stubbornness, and coercive behaviors. Despite these periodic negative expressions, controlling [Dominant] types typically make effective leaders, being talented in supervising and persuading others to work for the achievement of common goals. (p. 34)

Oldham and Morris (1995) supplement Millon's description with the following portrait of the normal (*Aggressive*) prototype of the Dominant pattern:

While others may aspire to leadership, Aggressive [Dominant] men and women move instinctively to the helm. They are born to assume command as surely as is the top dog in the pack. Theirs is a strong, forceful personality style, more inherently powerful than any of the others. They can undertake huge responsibilities without fear of failure. They wield power with ease. They never back away from a fight. They compete with the supreme confidence of champions. ... When put to the service of the greater good, the Aggressive [Dominant] personality style can inspire a man or woman to great leadership, especially in times of crisis. (p. 345)

Finally, Strack (1997) offers the following description of the normal (*forceful*) prototype of the Dominant pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Like confident [Ambitious] persons, forceful [Dominant] individuals can be identified by an inclination to turn toward the self as the primary source of gratification. However, instead of the confident [Ambitious] personality's internalized sense of self-importance, forceful [Dominant] people seem driven to prove their worthiness. They are characterized by an assertive, dominant, and tough-minded personal style. They tend to be strong-willed, ambitious, competitive, and self-determined. Feeling that the world is a harsh place where exploitiveness is needed to assure success, forceful [Dominant] individuals are frequently gruff and insensitive in dealing with others. In contrast to their preferred, outwardly powerful appearance, these individuals may feel inwardly insecure and be afraid of letting down their guard. In work settings, these personalities are often driven to excel. They work hard to achieve their goals, are competitive, and do well where they can take control or work independently. In supervisory or leadership positions, these persons usually take charge and see to it that a job gets done. (From Strack, 1997, p. 490, with minor modifications)

Millon's personality patterns have predictable, reliable, observable psychological indicators (expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object representations, and morphologic organization). Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Dominant pattern, the aggressive pole of the asserting–controlling–aggressive continuum. The diagnostic features of the Dominant pattern with respect to each of Millon's eight attribute domains are summarized below, along with “normalized” (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 514–515) descriptions of the more adaptive variants of this pattern. In all domains, the most extreme variant of the Dominant pattern is *not* relevant with respect to Roosevelt and is omitted from consideration in the following paragraphs.

Expressive behavior. The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Dominant individuals is *assertiveness*; they are tough, strong-willed, outspoken, competitive, and unsentimental. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern are characteristically *forceful*; they are controlling, contentious, and at times overbearing, their power-oriented tendencies being evident in occasional intransigence, stubbornness, and coercive behaviors. When they feel strongly about something, these individuals can be quite blunt, brusque, and impatient, with sudden, abrupt outbursts of an unwarranted or precipitous nature. All variants of this pattern tend to view tender emotions as a sign of weakness, avoid expressions of warmth and intimacy, and

are suspicious of gentility, compassion, and kindness. Many insist on being seen as faultless; however, they invariably are inflexible and dogmatic, rarely concede on any issue, even in the face of evidence negating the validity of their position. They have a low frustration threshold and are especially sensitive to reproach or deprecation. When pushed on personal matters, they can become furious and are likely to respond reflexively and often vindictively, especially when feeling humiliated or belittled. Thus, they are easily provoked to attack, their first inclination being to dominate and demean their adversaries. (Millon, 1996, pp. 483, 487)

Interpersonal conduct. The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Dominant individuals is their *commanding* presence; they are powerful, authoritative, directive, and persuasive. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern are characteristically *intimidating*; they tend to be abrasive, contentious, coercive, and combative, often dictate to others, and are willing and able to humiliate others to evoke compliance. Their strategy of assertion and dominance has an important instrumental purpose in interpersonal relations, as most people are intimidated by hostility, sarcasm, criticism, and threats. Thus, these personalities are adept at having their way by browbeating others into respect and submission. (Millon, 1996, p. 484; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

Cognitive style. The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Dominant individuals is its *opinionated* nature; they are outspoken, emphatic, and adamant, holding strong beliefs that they vigorously defend. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern tend to be *dogmatic*; they are inflexible and closed-minded, lacking objectivity and clinging obstinately to preconceived ideas, beliefs, and values. All variants of this pattern are finely attuned to the subtle elements of human interaction, keenly aware of the moods and feelings of others, and skilled at using others' foibles and sensitivities to manipulate them for their own purposes — for example, turning others' perceived weaknesses to their own advantage by upsetting the other's equilibrium in their quest to dominate and control. (Millon, 1996, pp. 484–485)

Mood/temperament. The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Dominant individuals is *irritability*; they have an excitable temper that they may at times find difficult to control. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern tend to be *cold* and unfriendly; they are disinclined to experience and express tender feelings, and have a volatile temper that flares readily into contentious argument and physical belligerence. All variants of this pattern are prone to anger and to a greater or lesser extent deficient in the capacity to share warm or tender feelings, to experience genuine affection and love for another, or to empathize with the needs of others. (Millon, 1996, p. 486; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

Self-image. The core diagnostic feature of the self-image of Dominant individuals is that they view themselves as *assertive*; they perceive themselves as forthright, unsentimental, and bold. More exaggerated variants of the Dominant pattern recognize their fundamentally *competitive* nature; they are strong-willed, energetic, and commanding, and may take pride in describing themselves as tough and realistically hardheaded. (Millon, 1996, p. 485; Millon & Everly, 1985, p. 32)

Regulatory mechanisms. The core diagnostic feature of the regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of highly Dominant individuals is *isolation*; they are able to detach

themselves emotionally from the impact of their controlling acts upon others. In some situations — politics being a case in point — these personalities may have learned that there are times when it is best to restrain and transmute their more aggressive thoughts and feelings. Thus, they may soften and redirect their hostility, typically by employing the mechanisms of *rationalization*, *sublimation*, and *projection*, all of which lend themselves in some fashion to finding plausible and socially acceptable excuses for less than admirable impulses and actions. Thus, blunt directness may be rationalized as signifying frankness and honesty, a lack of hypocrisy, and a willingness to face issues head on. On the longer term, socially sanctioned resolution (i.e., sublimation) of hostile urges is seen in the competitive occupations to which these aggressive personalities gravitate. Finally, these personalities may preempt the disapproval they anticipate from others by projecting their hostility onto them, thereby justifying their aggressive actions as mere counteraction to unjust persecution. (Millon, 1996, pp. 485–486)

Object representations. The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of highly Dominant individuals is their *pernicious* nature. Characteristically, there is a marked paucity of tender and sentimental objects, and an underdevelopment of images that activate feelings of shame or guilt. (Millon, 1996, p. 485)

Morphologic organization. The core diagnostic feature of the morphologic organization of highly Dominant individuals is its *eruptiveness*; powerful energies are so forceful that they periodically overwhelm these personalities' otherwise adequate modulating controls, defense operations, and expressive channels, resulting in the sometimes harsh behavior seen in these personalities. These personalities dread the thought of being vulnerable, of being deceived, and of being humiliated. Viewing people as basically ruthless, these personalities are driven to gain power over others, to dominate them and outmaneuver or outfox them at their own game. Personal feelings are regarded as a sign of weakness and dismissed as mere maudlin sentimentality. (Millon, 1996, p. 486)

Roosevelt's Ambitious Pattern

Roosevelt's profile showed a secondary elevation on Scale 2 (Ambitious). His score of 12 places him in the intermediate *self-serving* range of the Ambitious pattern.

The Ambitious pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are confident, socially poised, assertive personalities. Slightly exaggerated Ambitious features (as in the case of Roosevelt) occur in personalities that are sometimes perceived as self-promoting, overconfident, or arrogant. In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Ambitious pattern manifests itself in extreme self-absorption or exploitative behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of narcissistic personality disorder. In all domains, the most extreme variant of the Ambitious pattern is *not* relevant with respect to Roosevelt.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Ambitious pattern (i.e., confident and self-serving types) correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Self-Confident* style, Strack's (1997) *confident* style, and Millon's (1994) *Asserting* pattern. Millon's *Asserting* pattern is positively correlated with the five-factor model's *Extraversion* and *Conscientiousness* factors and negatively correlated

with its *Neuroticism* factor (Millon, 1994, p. 82). It is associated with “social composure, or poise, self-possession, equanimity, and stability” — a constellation of adaptive traits that in stronger doses shades into its dysfunctional variant, the narcissistic personality (Millon, 1994, p. 32). In combination with an elevated Outgoing pattern (Scale 3), it bears some resemblance to Simonton’s (1988) *charismatic* executive leadership style; however, Obama’s elevation on Scale 3 is relatively attenuated.

Millon (1994) summarizes the Asserting (i.e., Ambitious) pattern as follows:

An interpersonal boldness, stemming from a belief in themselves and their talents, characterize[s] those high on the ... Asserting [Ambitious] scale. Competitive, ambitious, and self-assured, they naturally assume positions of leadership, act in a decisive and unwavering manner, and expect others to recognize their special qualities and cater to them. Beyond being self-confident, those with an Asserting [Ambitious] profile often are audacious, clever, and persuasive, having sufficient charm to win others over to their own causes and purposes. Problematic in this regard may be their lack of social reciprocity and their sense of entitlement — their assumption that what they wish for is their due. On the other hand, their ambitions often succeed, and they typically prove to be effective leaders. (p. 32)

Oldham and Morris (1995) offer the following portrait of the normal (*Self-Confident*) prototype of the Ambitious pattern:

Self-Confident [Ambitious] individuals stand out. They’re the leaders, the shining lights, the attention-getters in their public or private spheres. Theirs is a star quality born of self-regard, self-respect, self-certainty — all those *self*-words that denote a faith in oneself and a commitment to one’s self-styled purpose. Combined with the ambition that marks this style, that ... self-regard can transform idle dreams into real accomplishment. ... Self-Confident [Ambitious] men and women know what they want, and they get it. Many of them have the charisma to attract plenty of others to their goals. They are extroverted and intensely political. They know how to work the crowd, how to motivate it, and how to lead it. (p. 85)

Strack (1997) provides the following description of the normal (*confident*) prototype of the Ambitious pattern, based on Millon’s theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Aloof, calm, and confident, these personalities tend to be egocentric and self-reliant. They may have a keen sense of their own importance, uniqueness, or entitlement. Confident [Ambitious] individuals enjoy others’ attention and may be quite bold socially, although they are seldom garish. They can be self-centered to a fault and may become so preoccupied with themselves that they lack concern and empathy for others. These persons have a tendency to believe that others share, or should share, their sense of worth. As a result, they may expect others to submit to their wishes and desires, and to cater to them. Ironically, the confident [Ambitious] individual’s secure appearance may cover feelings of personal inadequacy and a sensitivity to criticism and rejection. Unfortunately, they usually do not permit others to see their vulnerable side. When feeling exposed or undermined, these individuals are frequently disdainful, obstructive,

or vindictive. In the workplace, confident [Ambitious] persons like to take charge in an emphatic manner, often doing so in a way that instills confidence in others. Their self-assurance, wit, and charm often win them supervisory and leadership positions. (From Strack, 1997, pp. 489–490, with slight modifications)

For more detailed information about this pattern, see the section on “Obama’s Ambitious Pattern,” below.

Roosevelt’s Conscientious Pattern

Roosevelt’s profile also showed a secondary elevation on Scale 6 (Conscientious). His score of 11 places him in the intermediate *dutiful* range of the Conscientious pattern.

The Conscientious pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole are earnest, polite, *respectful* personalities. Exaggerated Conscientious features (as in the case of Roosevelt) occur in *dutiful*, dependable, and principled but rigid personalities. In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Conscientious pattern displays itself in moralistic, self-righteous, uncompromising, cognitively constricted, *compulsive* behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of obsessive-compulsive personality disorder. In all domains, the most extreme variant of the Conscientious pattern is *not* relevant with respect to Roosevelt.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Conscientious pattern (i.e., respectful and dutiful types) correspond to Oldham and Morris’s (1995) *Conscientious* style, Millon’s (1994) *Conforming* pattern, Strack’s (1997) *respectful* style, and the *responsible* segment of Leary’s (1957) *responsible–hypernormal* interpersonal continuum. Millon’s Conforming pattern is correlated with the five-factor model’s *Conscientiousness* factor, has a modest positive correlation with its *Extraversion* factor, a modest negative correlation with its *Neuroticism* factor, and is uncorrelated with its *Agreeableness* and *Openness to Experience* factors (see Millon, 1994, p. 82). Adaptive variants of the Conscientious pattern have “a well-disciplined and organized lifestyle that enables individuals to function efficiently and successfully in most of their endeavors,” in contrast to “the driven, tense, and rigid adherence to external demands and to a perfectionism that typifies the disordered [compulsive] state.” They “demonstrate an unusual degree of integrity, adhering as firmly as they can to society’s ethics and morals” (Millon, 1996, pp. 518–519). As stated by Oldham and Morris (1995):

Conscientious-style people ... [have] strong moral principle[s] and absolute certainty, and they won’t rest until the job is done and done right. They are loyal to their families, their causes, and their superiors. Hard work is a hallmark of this personality style; Conscientious types *achieve*. ... The Conscientious personality style flourishes within cultures ... in which the work ethic thrives. Conscientious traits ... [include] hard work, prudence, [and] conventionality. (p. 62)

Being principled, scrupulous, and meticulous, conscientious individuals “tend to follow standards from which they hesitate to deviate, attempt to act in an objective and rational manner, and decide matters in terms of what they believe is right.” They are often religious, and maintaining their integrity “ranks high among their goals” while “voicing moral values gives

them a deep sense of satisfaction.” The major limitations of this personality style are (a) its “superrationality,” leading to a “devaluation of emotion [which] tends to preclude relativistic judgments and subjective preferences”; and (b) a predilection for “seeing complex matters in black and white, good and bad, or right or wrong terms” (Millon, 1996, p. 519). Millon (1994) summarizes the Conscientious pattern (which he labels *Conforming*) as follows:

[Conscientious individuals possess] traits not unlike Leary’s [1957] responsible–hypernormal personality, with its ideal of proper, conventional, orderly, and perfectionistic behavior, as well as bearing a similarity to Factor III of the Big-Five, termed Conscientiousness. Conformers are notably respectful of tradition and authority, and act in a reasonable, proper, and conscientious way. They do their best to uphold conventional rules and standards, following given regulations closely, and tend to be judgmental of those who do not. Well-organized and reliable, prudent and restrained, they may appear to be overly self-controlled, formal and inflexible in their relationships, intolerant of deviance, and unbending in their adherence to social proprieties. Diligent about their responsibilities, they dislike having their work pile up, worry about finishing things, and come across to others as highly dependable and industrious. (p. 33)

Strack (1997) provides the following portrait of the normal (*respectful*) prototype of the Conscientious pattern, based on Millon’s theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Responsible, industrious, and respectful of authority, these individuals tend to be conforming and work hard to uphold rules and regulations. They have a need for order and are typically conventional in their interests. These individuals can be rule abiding to a fault, however, and may be perfectionistic, inflexible, and judgmental. A formal interpersonal style and notable constriction of affect can make some respectful [Conscientious] persons seem cold, aloof, and withholding. Underneath their social propriety there is often a fear of disapproval and rejection, or a sense of guilt over perceived shortcomings. Indecisiveness and an inability to take charge may be evident in some of these persons due to a fear of being wrong. However, among co-workers and friends, respectful [Conscientious] personalities are best known for being well organized, reliable, and diligent. They have a strong sense of duty and loyalty, are cooperative in group efforts, show persistence even in difficult circumstances, and work well under supervision. (From Strack, 1997, p. 490, with minor modifications)

Summary and Formulation: Roosevelt

As previously stated, Franklin D. Roosevelt exhibits a combination of Dominant (Scale 1A) and Ambitious (Scale 2) tendencies. Because Millon does not provide a description of a personality subtype that pertains to Roosevelt’s combination of Dominant (Scale 1A) and Ambitious (Scale 2) tendencies, we compared Roosevelt’s Dominant and Ambitious tendencies across the five domains of the MIDC.

Expressive behavior. Roosevelt obtained the same score on the expressive behavior (Attribute A) domain on both the Dominant and Ambitious scales, receiving endorsements on all three levels (a, b, c) of the domain. One example of how Roosevelt manifests Scale 1A occurred

on October 21, 1944 when Roosevelt toured New York's four largest boroughs in an open limousine in 40-degree weather and pouring rain to reassure voters that he was in good health (Smith, 2007, p. 626). One way in which Roosevelt exemplified Scale 2 in the domain of expressive behavior comes from Burns's book when he analyzes how Roosevelt being stricken with polio did not affect his personality. Burns writes: "Nor did his illness give him a sudden new confidence in himself. His confidence in his capacity to win battles, political or otherwise — 'cockiness,' his political rivals called it — had steadily expanded as his public activities broadened" (Burns, 1956, p. 89).

Interpersonal conduct. Roosevelt obtained the same score on both the Dominant and Ambitious scales of the interpersonal conduct (Attribute B) domain, earning 3 of the possible 6 endorsements in each domain. One example of how Roosevelt manifests the Dominant tendency of viciousness comes from Burns's book when Roosevelt is quoted telling an audience that a political rival "'and his kind' must be destroyed, that the 'beasts of prey have begun to fall'" (Burns, 1956, p. 41). One way in which Roosevelt displays the Ambitious quality of Machiavellianism occurred when Roosevelt spoke to a crowd during his 1936 presidential campaign, saying "There is one issue in this campaign. It is myself, and the people must be either for me or against me. We will win easily, but we are going to make it a crusade" (Smith, 2007, p. 360).

Cognitive style. Roosevelt scored higher on the Ambitious scale of this domain (one endorsement) than he did on the Dominant scale (no endorsements). As previously stated, the domain of cognitive style is typically the most difficult of the five domains in which to gather information at a distance. One example that sheds light on Roosevelt's Ambitious cognitive style comes from Sam Rosenman, who at the time was a young member of the New York legislature but would later become an aid of Roosevelt's. Rosenman said he "had never seen anybody who could grasp the facts of a complicated problem as quickly and as thoroughly as Roosevelt" (Smith, 2007, p. 226).

Mood/temperament. On the fourth domain of the MIDC, Roosevelt scored higher on the Dominant scale (three endorsements) than he did on the Ambitious scale (one endorsement). One aspect of the Dominant scale is cruelty, and Roosevelt exemplified this:

unvaryingly kind and gracious, yet a thin streak of cruelty ran through some of his behavior. He remained unruffled and at ease under the most intense pressures; yet when pricked in certain ways he struck out at his enemies in sharp, querulous words. (Burns, 1956, p. 472)

Self-image. Roosevelt received endorsements at all three levels (a, b, c) of the self-image domain on the Dominant scale in the domain of the MIDC, compared to just two endorsements (level b) on the Ambitious scale. One of the subscale descriptors of the Dominant scale of this domain is that a person be cited as energetic. Burns writes, "If other leaders bent under the burdens of power, Roosevelt shouldered his with zest and gaiety" (Burns, 1956, p. 264).

Obama's Ambitious Pattern

Obama's highest scale elevation was on Scale 2, which measures an individual's level of ambitiousness, which can range from normal self-confidence (healthy narcissism) to pathological narcissism. Obama's score of 10 places him in the intermediate *self-serving* range.

A broad overview of the Ambitious pattern and its three gradations has already been provided, in the section dealing with "Roosevelt's Ambitious Pattern," above. Following is a more detailed discussion of the Ambitious pattern, focusing on the typical characteristics associated with each of its attribute domains.

Millon's personality patterns have well-established diagnostic indicators associated with each of the eight attribute domains of expressive behavior, interpersonal conduct, cognitive style, mood/temperament, self-image, regulatory mechanisms, object-representations, and morphologic organization. Millon's (1996) attribute domains accentuate the maladaptive range of the personality patterns in his taxonomy — in the case of the Ambitious pattern, the exploitative pole of the confident–self-serving–exploitative continuum. The major diagnostic features of the prototypal maladaptive variant of the Ambitious pattern are summarized below, along with "normalized" (i.e., de-pathologized; cf. Millon & Davis, 2000, pp. 273–277) descriptions of the more adaptive variants of this pattern. Nonetheless, some of the designated traits may be less pronounced and more adaptive in the case of individuals for whom this pattern is less elevated. In all domains, the most extreme variant of the Ambitious pattern is *not* relevant with respect to Obama and is omitted from consideration in the following paragraphs.

Expressive behavior. The core diagnostic feature of the expressive acts of Ambitious individuals is their *confidence*; they are socially poised, self-assured, and self-confident, conveying an air of calm, untroubled self-assurance. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern tend to act in a *conceited* manner, their natural self-assurance shading into supreme self-confidence, hubris, immodesty, or presumptuousness. They are self-promoting and may display an inflated sense of self-importance. They typically have a superior, supercilious, imperious, haughty, disdainful manner. Characteristically, though usually unwittingly, they exploit others, take them for granted, and frequently act as though entitled. All variants of this pattern are to some degree self-centered and lacking in generosity and social reciprocity. (Millon, 1996, p. 405; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

Interpersonal conduct. The core diagnostic feature of the interpersonal conduct of Ambitious individuals is their *assertiveness*; they stand their ground and are tough, competitive, persuasive, hardnosed, and shrewd. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are *entitled*; they lack genuine empathy and expect favors without assuming reciprocal responsibilities. All variants of this pattern are skilled at sizing up those around them and conditioning those so disposed to adulate, glorify, and serve them. (Millon, 1996, pp. 405–406; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

Cognitive style. The core diagnostic feature of the cognitive style of Ambitious individuals is their *imaginativeness*; they are inventive, innovative, and resourceful, and ardently

believe in their own efficacy. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are cognitively *expansive*; they display extraordinary confidence in their own ideas and potential for success and redeem themselves by taking liberty with facts or distorting the truth. All variants of this pattern to some degree harbor fantasies of success or rationalize their failures; thus, they tend to exaggerate their achievements, transform failures into successes, construct lengthy and intricate justifications that inflate their self-worth, and quickly deprecate those who refuse to bend to or enhance their admirable sense of self. (Millon, 1996, p. 406; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

Mood/temperament. The core diagnostic feature of the characteristic mood and temperament of Ambitious individuals is their social *poise*; they are self-composed, serene, and optimistic, and are typically imperturbable, unruffled, cool, and levelheaded under pressure. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern are *insouciant*; they manifest a general air of nonchalance, imperturbability, or feigned tranquility. They characteristically appear coolly unimpressible or buoyantly optimistic, except when their narcissistic confidence is shaken, at which time either rage, shame, or emptiness is briefly displayed. All variants of this pattern to some degree convey a self-satisfied smugness, yet are easily angered when criticized, obstructed, or crossed. (Millon, 1996, p. 408; Millon & Everly, 1985, pp. 32, 39)

Self-image. The core diagnostic feature of the self-perception of Ambitious individuals is their *certitude*; they have strong self-efficacy beliefs and considerable courage of conviction. More exaggerated variants of the Ambitious pattern have an *admirable* sense of self; they view themselves as extraordinarily meritorious and esteemed by others, and have a high degree of self-worth, though others may see them as egotistic, inconsiderate, cocksure, and arrogant. (Millon, 1996, p. 406)

Regulatory mechanisms. The core diagnostic features of the unconscious regulatory (i.e., ego-defense) mechanisms of Ambitious individuals are *rationalization* and *fantasy*; when their admirable self-image is challenged or their confidence shaken, they maintain equilibrium with facile self-deceptions, devising plausible reasons to justify their self-centered and socially inconsiderate behaviors. They rationalize their difficulties, offering alibis to put themselves in a positive light despite evident shortcomings and failures. When rationalization fails, they turn to fantasy to assuage their feelings of dejection, shame, or emptiness, redeem themselves, and reassert their pride and status. (Millon, 1996, p. 407)

Object representations. The core diagnostic feature of the internalized object representations of Ambitious individuals is their *contrived* nature; the inner imprint of significant early experiences that serves as a substrate of dispositions (i.e., templates) for perceiving and reacting to current life events, consists of illusory and changing memories. Consequently, problematic experiences are refashioned to appear consonant with their high sense of self-worth, and unacceptable impulses and deprecatory evaluations are transmuted into more admirable images and percepts. (Millon, 1996, pp. 406–407)

Morphologic organization. The core diagnostic feature of the morphological organization of Ambitious individuals is its *spuriousness*; the interior design of the personality system, so to speak, is essentially counterfeit, or bogus. Owing to the misleading nature of their early experiences — characterized by the ease with which good things came to them — these

individuals may lack the inner skills necessary for regulating their impulses, channeling their needs, and resolving conflicts. Accordingly, commonplace demands may be viewed as annoying incursions and routine responsibilities as pedestrian or demeaning. (Millon, 1996, pp. 407–408)

Obama's Conscientious Pattern

Obama's profile showed a secondary elevation on Scale 2 (Ambitious). His score of 11 places him in the *respectful* range of the Conscientious pattern. In all domains, the most extreme variant of the Conscientious pattern is *not* relevant with respect to Obama.

An overview of the Conscientious pattern and its three gradations has already been provided, in the section dealing with "Roosevelt's Conscientious Pattern," above.

Obama's Retiring Pattern

Obama's profile also showed a secondary elevation on Scale 8 (Retiring). His score of 7 places him in the *reserved* range of the Retiring pattern (i.e., introversion).

The Retiring pattern, as do all personality patterns, occurs on a continuum ranging from normal to maladaptive. At the well-adjusted pole (as in the case of Barack Obama) are self-contained, unsociable, reserved personalities. Exaggerated Retiring features occur in stolid, unobtrusive, aloof personalities. In its most deeply ingrained, inflexible form, the Retiring pattern displays itself in unanimated, asocial, solitary behavior patterns that may be consistent with a clinical diagnosis of schizoid personality disorder. In all domains, the most extreme variant of the Retiring pattern is *not* relevant with respect to Obama.

Normal, adaptive variants of the Retiring pattern (i.e., reserved and aloof types), characterized by low levels of sociability and companionability (Millon, 1994, p. 31), correspond to Oldham and Morris's (1995) *Solitary* style, Strack's (1997) *introversive* style, and Millon's (1994) *Retiring* pattern. Millon's Retiring pattern is negatively correlated with the five-factor model's *Extraversion* factor, positively correlated with its *Neuroticism* factor, has modest negative correlations with its *Openness to Experience* and *Agreeableness* factors, and is uncorrelated with its *Conscientiousness* factor (see Millon, 1994, p. 82).

According to Oldham and Morris (1995), these "solitary-style" individuals are self-contained people without a need for external guidance, admiration, or emotional sustenance. They feel no need to share their experiences and draw their greatest strength and comfort from within. According to Oldham and Morris (1995),

Solitary men and women need no one but themselves. They are unmoved by the madding crowd, liberated from the drive to impress and to please. Solitary people are remarkably free of the emotions and involvements that distract so many others. What they may give up in terms of sentiment and intimacy, however, they may gain in clarity of vision. (p. 275)

Millon (1994) summarizes the Retiring pattern as follows:

[Retiring individuals] evince few social or group interests. . . . Their needs to give and receive affection and to show feelings tend to be minimal. They are inclined to have few relationships and interpersonal involvements, and do not develop strong ties to other people. They may be seen by others as calm, placid, untroubled, easygoing, and possibly indifferent. Rarely expressing their inner feelings or thoughts to others, they seem most comfortable when left alone. They tend to work in a slow, quiet, and methodical manner, almost always remaining in the background in an undemanding and unobtrusive way. Comfortable working by themselves, they are not easily distracted or bothered by what goes on around them. Being somewhat deficient in the ability to recognize the needs or feelings of others, they may be seen as socially awkward, if not insensitive, as well as lacking in spontaneity and vitality. (p. 31)

Strack (1997) provides the following portrait of the normal (*introversive*) prototype of the Retiring pattern, based on Millon's theory, empirical findings from studies correlating his Personality Adjective Check List (PACL; 1991) scales with other measures, and clinical experience with the instrument:

Aloof, introverted, and solitary, these persons usually prefer distant or limited involvement with others and have little interest in social activities, which they find unrewarding. Appearing to others as complacent and untroubled, they are often judged to be easy-going, mild-mannered, quiet, and retiring. They frequently remain in the background of social life and work quietly and unobtrusively at a job. At school or in the workplace these people do well on their own, are typically dependable and reliable, are undemanding, and are seldom bothered by noise or commotion around them. They are often viewed as levelheaded and calm. However, these individuals may appear unaware of, or insensitive to, the feelings and thoughts of others. These characteristics are sometimes interpreted by others as signs of indifference or rejection, but reveal a sincere difficulty in being able to sense others' moods and needs. Introversive [Retiring] persons can be slow and methodical in demeanor, lack spontaneity and resonance, and be awkward or timid in social or group situations. They frequently view themselves as being simple and unsophisticated, and are usually modest in appraising their own skills and abilities. At the same time, their placid demeanor and ability to weather ups and downs without being ruffled are traits frequently prized by friends, family members, and co-workers. (From Strack, 1997, p. 488, with minor modifications)

Summary and Formulation: Obama

As previously stated, this study found that Barack Obama exhibits a combination of Ambitious (Scale 2) and Conscientious (Scale 6) tendencies. Because Millon does not provide a description of a personality subtype that pertains to Obama's combination of Ambitious (Scale 2) and Conscientious (Scale 6) tendencies, we compared Obama's Ambitious and Conscientious tendencies across the five domains of the MIDC.

Expressive behavior. On this domain of the MIDC, Obama scored 3 out of a possible 6 points on both the Ambitious and Conscientious scales. One example that illustrates Obama's Ambitious tendencies within the domain of expressive behavior comes from Thomas's book, where he writes, "Obama had a way of transcending ambition, though he himself was ambitions as hell" (Thomas, 2009, p. 2).

Interpersonal conduct. On both the Ambitious and Conscientious scales, Obama scored 1 out of 6 possible points in the interpersonal conduct domain. Obama epitomizes the Ambitious scale trait of competitiveness in the interpersonal conduct domain. Price (2008) writes that “one of his [Obama’s] colleagues, State Senator Larry Walsh, described him as competitive yet careful, and always hard to read” (p. 55). One of the subscale descriptors of Conscientiousness on this domain is being respectful. Obama exemplifies this in the following quotation from Price’s book:

In an article entitled “Great Expectations” that appeared in the *American Prospect* in February 2006, author Jodi Enda notes that in Barack there is a sense of destiny, and his background and charm, his intellect and his way with words, all mark him as someone special. She adds that he is ever mindful to show respect for his colleagues, some of which had been in the Senate for most of Barack’s life. (Price, 2008, p. 70)

Cognitive style. While Obama scored 1 out of a possible 6 points within this domain on both the Ambitious and Conscientious scales, he did receive “Equivocal/Affirmative” scores on both remaining subscales of the Conscientious pattern. Cautiousness is one of the subscale descriptors of Conscientiousness on this domain, and Thomas (2009) provides a case of this when he writes, “As a senator, Obama showed a notable unwillingness to take political risks by reaching across the aisle on controversial matters” (p. 188).

Mood/temperament. In this domain, Obama received a higher score on Scale 6 (3 points; two endorsements) than he did on Scale 2 (1 point; one endorsement). Thomas illustrates how Obama manifests the subscale of restraint when he points out that,

Unlike presidents Reagan, Clinton and both Bushes — who all readily choked up or shed tears — Obama rarely showed any emotion. But now [when his grandmother died] he reached into a pocket, pulled out a handkerchief and dabbed his face, wet with tears. (Thomas, 2009, p. 177)

Self-image. Obama received one endorsement on both the Conscientious and Ambitious scales in this domain. Key descriptors from this subscale that describe Obama are “disciplined, responsible, industrious, and efficient.” Obama himself is quoted in Price’s book reminiscing about his college years, calling them “an intense period of study,” recalling, “I spent a lot of time in the library. I didn’t socialize that much. I was like a monk” (Price, 2008, p. 33).

Profile Comparison

Personality similarities. Roosevelt and Obama share two of their three most prominent personality patterns — Conscientiousness (Scale 6) and Ambitiousness (Scale 2). For Roosevelt, Conscientiousness was his third most prominent pattern (he received a score of 11) and for Obama it was his second most prominent pattern (with a score of 9). Ambitiousness was the second most prominent trait for both presidents (Roosevelt, 12; Obama, 10).

Both Roosevelt and Obama were found to share the Conscientious trait of extraordinary attention to detail. Throughout Roosevelt’s 13 years as president, attention to detail is a common theme, and perhaps one of his best traits. John Gunther, one of Washington’s most astute

observers, said the following about Roosevelt's understanding in how to deal with Congress: "No president ever approached the prerogatives of the legislative body with more scrupulous attention to detail" (Smith, 2007, p. 306). An example of Obama's attention to detail is cited in Thomas's book where he describes Obama's attention to detail in preparation for the presidential debates: "No detail was overlooked. The podiums were set at the precise angles. Obama rehearsed in the evenings, to match his natural circadian rhythms" (Thomas, 2009, p. 142).

The second scale on which Roosevelt and Obama received similar scores on was Scale 2 (Ambitious). As stated above, Roosevelt received a score of 12 and Obama a score of 10. One descriptor that exemplifies both presidents on the Ambitious pattern is a self-confident, sometimes cocky attitude. Burns writes that even late in Roosevelt's presidency his fireside chats were "as warm and stirring as ever; he was perhaps even more charming and persuasive with visitors; he appeared to have lost none of his cocky self-assurance" (Burns, 1956, p. 346). This tendency is also evident in Obama, as a long-serving liberal senator was heard trashing Obama at a Washington party soon after Obama was elected to the Senate. He was heard saying, "This guy is too big for his britches, he needs to be taken down a notch" (Wolffe, 2009, p. 40).

Personality contrasts. When analyzing the profiles of Roosevelt and Obama, there are two scales where the presidents' scores differ sharply: Scale 1A (Dominant) and Scale 8 (Retiring). Roosevelt's highest score was on the Dominant scale, where he received 19 points. In contrast, Obama received only 1 point on the Dominant scale. The significant difference in Dominant tendencies between Roosevelt and Obama is evident in the following quote from a letter written by Roosevelt in September 1938:

"I have had a pretty strenuous two weeks," Roosevelt wrote a friend, but a cruise taken in midsummer "made it possible for me to come through except for a stupid and continuing runny nose. A few days ago I wanted to kill Hitler and amputate the nose. Today, I have really friendly feelings for the latter and no longer wish to assassinate the Fuehrer." (Burns, 1956, p. 387)

Such a statement would be characterized as extremely atypical coming from Obama. It is far more likely that Obama would withdraw from the situation, which leads to the second significant difference between the profiles of Roosevelt and Obama.

The second scale in which the profiles of Roosevelt and Obama sharply differ is on Scale 8 (Retiring). On this scale Obama garnered a score of 7 and Roosevelt received a score of zero. This personality difference is made evident in Wolffe's book, where he writes about an interview with Obama in which he describes his collegiate lifestyle:

"This was my ascetic phase. Everything was stripped down." He lived like a recluse, talking to nobody but himself. "I literally went to class, came home, read books, and took long walks, wrote." He explained. "I really think that during those two years I had to look inward and gather myself." (Wolffe, 2009, p. 31)

The more solitary and ascetic approach that Obama took while in college can be contrasted to Roosevelt's bustling social life. Roosevelt's lively social life is part of the reason he was absent from class seventy-three times his first year at Columbia Law School (Smith, 2007, p. 51). Missing such a number of classes would have been unthinkable for Obama at that point in his life.

Conclusion

The presidencies Franklin D. Roosevelt and Barack Obama naturally draw comparisons in multiple disciplines. From a historical standpoint, the tumultuous economic times and political climate in which both were elected naturally draw comparison. This study of the personality profiles of Roosevelt and Obama has added another dimension to that comparison — one of their personalities. In psychology, both Roosevelt and Obama have in common traits of ambitiousness and conscientiousness. However, they differ in the personality characteristics of dominance — with Roosevelt being the more dominant president — and emotional detachment — with Obama being the more retiring, less extraverted leader. Despite the 75 years that separate their inaugurations, both historical and personality parallels can be drawn between Roosevelt and Obama.

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